

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9171

INFO AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USLO PEKING

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 1789

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CH

SUBJECT: PRC FOREIGN POLICY UNDER HUA KUO-FENG

SUMMARY: SINCE THE SUPRISE APPOINTMENT OF HUA KUO-FENG AS ACTING PREMIER, THE PRC LEADERSHIP APPEARS TO BE INDICATING CLEARLY THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO CHANGE IN THE BASIC PREMISES OF ITS FOREIGN POLICY. AFTER A WEEK'S LULL IN PRC MEDIA SELF-GENERATED ANTI-SOVIET POLEMICS, BOTH PEOPLE'S DAILY AND NCNA HAVE SINCE FEBRUARY 11 BEEN CARRYING DAILY ANTI-SOVIET DIATRIBES. THE CONTINUATION OF THE "OPENING TO THE WEST" POLICY APPEARS CONFIRMED BOTH BY THE INVITATION TO FORMER PRESIDENT NIXON TO REVISIT PEKING AND BY THE UTILIZATION OF HUA KUO-FENG'S MEETING WITH THE FIRST VENEZUELAN AMBASSADOR TO PEKING TO IDENTIFY HUA IN HIS NEW POSITION. FINALLY, HIGH-LEVEL VISITORS HAVE RETURNED TO PEKING WITH FONMIN CHIAO KUAN-HUA

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AND OTHER RANKING FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS PLAYING THEIR

USUAL ROLES, AND BOTH THE NEW ZEALAND AND AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTERS HAVE ANNOUNCED SCHEDULED VISITS IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS. ALL OF THESE INDICATIONS APPEAR DESIGNED TO ASSURE THE U.S. AND OTHERS OF THE CONTINUITY OF BASIC PRC POLICY LINES, ALTHOUGH THERE REMAINS SOME QUESTION CONCERNING THE EXTENT OF HUA'S FUTURE PERSONAL ROLE IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS. END SUMMARY

1. THE LULL IN OVERALL PRC MEDIA COMMENT ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, PARTICULARLY MARKED BY AN ABSENCE SINCE FEBRUARY 5 OF ANY PRC SELF-GENERATED ANTI-SOVIET POLEMICS, ENDED FEBRUARY 11 WITH A PEOPLE'S DAILY CORRESPONDENT'S ARTICLE ON SOVIET ESPIONAGE IN WESTERN EUROPE. SINCE THEN, THERE HAS BEEN A DAILY OUTPOURING OF BOTH PEOPLE'S DAILY AND NCNA CORRESPONDENT ARTICLES CONDEMNING THE SOVIETS IN THE SAME TERMINOLOGY AS IN THE PAST. THE SUBJECT MATTER IS ALSO STANDARD--ANGOLA, GREAT RUSSIAN CHAUVINISM, SEEKING HEGEMONY IN EUROPE, INTERNAL ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, AND MILITARY BUILD-UP.

2. THE RETURN TO ROUTINE CONDEMNATION OF SOVIETS HAS BEEN OF CONSIDERABLE INTEREST SINCE SOME OBSERVERS HAVE MADE MUCH OF HUA KUO-FENG'S ROLE IN THE RETURN OF THE SOVIET HELICOPTER CREW. AS HEAD OF PUBLIC SECURITY, HUA WAS CERTAINLY INVOLVED IN THE INVESTIGATION OF THE INCIDENT AND THE PUBLIC SECURITY BUREAU'S ROLE IN RECOMMENDING RELEASE OF THE CREW WAS SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED IN NCNA RELEASES AT THE TIME. THUS, IF THE CREW'S RELEASE WERE TO BE CONSIDERED A GENUINE PRC ATTEMPT TO SEEK RECONCILIATION WITH THE SOVIETS, NO MATTER HOW SLIGHT, HUA COULD HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED WITH THE MOVE AND WITH A POSSIBLE ATTEMPT TO BETTER SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS. IN VIEW OF THE RENEWED POLEMICS, THIS ARGUMENT APPEARS INACCURATE.

3. THE CLEARER PRC SIGNALS ON CONTINUATION OF THE "TURN TO THE WEST" POLICY WERE THE CHOICE OF A MEETING WITH THE FIRST VENEZUELAN AMBASSADOR TO PEKING AS THE NCNA NOTIFICATION OF THE HUA KUO-FENG'S POSITION AS ACTING PREMIER, OF FORMER PRESIDENT NIXON'S RETURN VISIT

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TO PEKING TO CELEBRATE THE FOURTH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS HISTORIC FIRST VISIT. ALTHOUGH THE INVITATION FOR A RETURN NIXON VISIT HAS BEEN PROFFERED SEVERAL TIMES (MOST RECENTLY DURING THE JULIE AND DAVID EISENHOWER VISIT), THE TIMING OF THE ANNOUNCEMENT APPEARS MORE THAN ACCIDENTAL AND CAN BE READ AS AN EXPLICIT CHINESE REAFFIRMATION OF THE DESIRE TO CONTINUE THE NORMALIZATION PROCESS.

4. HIGH-RANKING FOREIGN VISITORS HAVE ALSO RETURNED THIS WEEK TO PEKING AFTER A MARKED ABSENCE CAUSED FIRST BY PREMIER CHOU'S DEATH AND FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS AND MORE RECENTLY BY LEADERSHIP'S ABSORPTION WITH THE SUCCESSION. DURING THE PAST FOUR DAYS, DELEGATIONS FROM ZAIRE, MAURITANIA, AND THE FRG HAVE BEEN IN PEKING. HUA KUO-FENG HAS MET ONLY WITH THE MAURITANIANS, WITH THIS APPEARANCE PROVIDING THE CHINESE MEDIA THE OPPORTUNITY FOR FRONT-PAGE PICTURES OF THE ACTING PREMIER. FONMIN CHIAO KUAN-HUA HAS BEEN ACTIVE WITH ALL THREE GROUPS, HOSTING BANQUETS AND MAKING TYPICAL PRC BANQUET SPEECHES. CANG CHUN-CHIAO HAS ALSO EMERGED WITH DEFINATE ROLE IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS, MEETING BOTH THE FRG DELEGATION AND WITH AUSTRALIAN COMMUNIST LEADER E.F. HILL. MORE CLUES TO WHO IS RUNNING FOREIGN AFFAIRS SHOULD BE PROVIDED BY THE NIXON VISIT AND SUBSEQUENT VISITS BY THE NEW ZEALAND AND AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTERS.

5. ALTHOUGH HUA KUO-FENG HAD LITTLE PAST IDENTIFICATION IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND WE HAVE NO INDICATION THAT HE HAS EVER TRAVEL OUTSIDE CHINA, HE HAS BEEN MEETING A GROWING NUMBER OF FOREIGN GUESTS IN THE PAST TWO YEARS. WHILE MANY OF THESE MEETINGS HAVE BEEN IN THE AGRICULTURAL, SPORTS, OR SCIENCE FIELDS, WITH WHICH HUA HAS ALSO BEEN IDENTIFIED INTERNALLY, HE ALSO PARTICIPATED IN ACTIVITIES IN SEVERAL MAJOR VISITS, INCLUDING DURING 1975, THOSE OF MALTESE PRIME MINISTER, KIM IL-SUNG, PRESIDENT MARCOS, AND PRIME MINISTER KHUKRIT.

6. HUA KUO-FENG WAS ALSO CLOSELY IDENTIFIED WITH THE MARCH 1975 RELEASE OF THE EX-KMT "WAR CRIMINALS". HUA KUO-FENG BOTH ANNOUNCED THE RELEASE AND PRESIDED OVER THE CONFIDENTIAL

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MEETING AT WHICH THE MEN WERE FORMALLY PARDONED.

7. IN RETROSPECT, IT COULD BE ARGUED THAT HUA KUO-FENG HAS INDEED RECEIVED SOME GROOMING IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS (ALBEIT ALONG WITH HIS FELLOW VICE PREMIERS), ALTHOUGH HIS BACKGROUND AND FORMAL RESPONSIBILITIES HAVE FOCUSED ON INTERNAL MATTERS. HIS RELATIVE INEXPERIENCE IN THIS AREA, HOWEVER, SUGGESTS THE POSSIBILITY THAT FORMULATION OF FOREIGN POLICY IN THE FUTURE WILL NOT BE DOMINATED BY A SINGLE LEADER, SUCH AS CHOU EN-LAI, BUT REFLECT A CONSENSUS OF THE NEW LEADERSHIP. IT APPEARS AT THE MOMENT, HOWEVER, THAT THE CHINESE LEADERSHIP HAS ALREADY SIGNALED A CONTINUITY OF FOREIGN POLICY AND THAT, WHATEVER DISCUSSIONS ARE BEING CAUSED BY INTERNAL DIFFERENCES, THUS FAR, THESE HAVE NOT BEEN REFLECTED IN EXTERNAL

AFFAIRS.  
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